

Questionnaire of Sense of Self-Dignity (QSSD-3): Construction and analysis of psychometric properties

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The article presents the results of work on designing the Questionnaire of Sense of Self-Dignity (QSSD-3) by Brudek and Steuden. Psychometric properties of the tool (reliability of measurement for four dimensions of self-dignity, factorial structure and validity) were determined. The obtained results comply with the requirements imposed on psychometric and psychological tests and indicate that QSSD-3 can be used in scientific research. The final version of the questionnaire consists of 36 items forming four dimensions: Cognition, Loss, Relation, and Experiencing. The scale has been tested in studies on 1,189 individuals. The reliability coefficients (Cronbach's α) for the individual scales range from .87 to .91. The preliminary assessment of validity of the questionnaire was conducted using confirmatory factor analysis. In addition, it was found that the results obtained in some subscales of the QSSD-3 are influenced by socio-demographic variables such as age, sex and health status.

Keywords: sense of self-dignity; dimension of cognition; dimension of loss; dimension of relation; dimension of experience.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of human dignity has become a subject of special interest to scientists after World War II. It was at that time that the process (lasting to the present day) referred to in the literature as “the revolution of human dignity” was initiated (Toth, 1968). A measurable effect of this process has been the increasing number of publications—both scientific and popular scientific—dedicated to the issue of human dignity (Steuden, 2011, 2016).

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Although academic discourse has substantially contributed to the increase in public awareness and understanding of real respect for human dignity, further research is necessary. Careful analysis of reality provides convincing evidence for that, revealing a growing gap between the trends absolutizing human dignity on the one hand, and relativizing the value of human life on the other (Kozielecki, 1977; Picker, 2007). As a result, we are now dealing with a number of phenomena (Lindert, Carta, Schäfer & Mollica, 2016; Marmot, 2016), which call into question the key thesis contained in the preamble to the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which states that "(...) all human beings are born free and equal in dignity and right" (Article 1) and that "Everyone (...) has the right to social security and is entitled to realization (...) of the economic, social and cultural rights indispensable for his dignity (...). Considering the above, it seems reasonable to say that the issue of human dignity demands cognitive exploration in different areas of research—also in psychology (Kozielecki, 1996; Statman, 2000; Chochinov, Hack, McClement, Kristjanson, & Harlos, 2002; Maddi & Costa 2007; Shultziner & Rabinovici, 2012; Grassi, Costantini, Caruso, Brunetti, Marchetti, Sabato, & Nanni, 2016).

One notable response to the need for systematic reflection on the meaning of the sense of dignity to the functioning of a person was the 33rd Scientific Meeting of the Polish Psychological Association held in Poland (Poznań) in 2008. The central idea of this meeting was: "To live in dignity..." In the introduction to Conference proceedings, Sęk and Brzezińska (2008, p. 7) stressed that:

(...) the issue of dignified life is not frequently discussed in psychology, but it is worth exploring its old and new meanings (...). This is because a person living with dignity has self-esteem, can express it, and inspire esteem and respect in other people (...). One can live in dignity in health and disease, in youth and in the last years of one's life.

The analysis of psychological literature indicates that there are an increasing number of publications on the issues of human dignity and the sense of self-dignity of the individual, especially those regarding the last stage of life (Franklin, Ternstedt, & Nordenfelt, 2006; Baillie, 2009; Steuden, 2011, 2016; Laitinen, Niemelä, & Pirhonen, 2016). Still, there is a lack of self-dignity measurement instruments which would possess good psychometric qualities and enable empirical research in the area of dignity and its relationships with other psychological variables.

The methods for the assessment of self-dignity developed so far by authors such as Chochinov, Hack, Hassard, Kristjanson, McClement and Harlos (2002), Chochinov, Hack, Hassard and Kristjanson (2004), Cone (2005), Steuden (2010), Rudilla, Oliver, Galiana and Barreto (2016), and Chochinov, Thompson and McClement (2016) are valuable attempts at filling the "gap" in the catalogue of psychological measurement tools; they are, however, more suitable for qualitative than quantitative analyses, or only addressed narrow (specific) groups of people. Keeping this in mind, we made an attempt to de-

velop a self-dignity scale that would meet the psychometric requirements for psychological tests and allow to study self-dignity under the quantitative paradigm.

THEORETICAL BASIS OF QSSD-3

In the literature of the subject, human dignity is defined very differently (Haddock, 1996; Kass, 2008; Dixon, Palfreyman, Shackley, & Brazier, 2008). It is a focus of many scientific disciplines (Steuden, 2011; Anderberg, Lepp, Berglund, & Segesten, 2007; Sulmasy, 2008). The concepts of dignity found in scientific literature can be assigned to six main groups: (1) theological, (2) philosophical, (3) legal, (4) medical, (5) sociological, and (6) psychological (Balzer, Rippe, & Schaber, 2000; Bielefeldt, 2000; Chochinov, 2006, 2007; Shultziner, 2006; Jacobson, 2007; Lee, 2008; Rao, 2011; McCrudden, 2013; Jacobs, 2000; Sison, Ferrero, & Guitian, 2016). Given the nature of this study and its limited scope, only some of the concepts developed in psychology are discussed below.

In psychological literature, it is clearly pointed out that every person has the right to an inalienable and permanent dignity by virtue of the very fact of being human (Fukuyama, 2005; Steuden, 2011; Edlund, Lindwall, Post, & Lindström, 2013). This kind of dignity is not the subject of social scientific research, however, being rather, the domain of philosophers, ethicists, theologians and politicians (Kozielecki, 1998; Beyleveld, 2001; Burrow, 2006). Psychological studies are interested in personal dignity and a feeling of self-dignity (Kozielecki, 1998; Oleś, 2007; Steuden, 2011, 2016).

In the opinion of Kozielecki (1977, 1998), personal dignity can be viewed as an attitude—a relatively constant tendency to behave in a particular way towards objects, other people as well as oneself (Aronson, Wilson, & Akert, 2006)—thus being one of the most important structures of an individual's nature. To assess the extent to which the attitude of a particular person is dignified, one should thoroughly examine their efforts in the area of social life and their stance towards other people and the self.

The attitude called dignity can be viewed as a continuum stretched between two opposite poles. At one pole is a human being who has personal dignity, and at the other—somebody who is completely deprived of it. Dignity, considered in terms of an attitude, constitutes a moral aspect of character, like pro-social attitudes as well as honesty and moral courage (Kozielecki, 1998; Fenton & Mitchell, 2002; Steuden, 2011; Pelser, 2015).

According to Kozielecki (1977, p. 14), personal dignity "(...) is not a gift that a person receives from nature or from society; neither is it a commodity that can be purchased at a market price. Dignity (...) is inextricably linked to human activity; an individual develops it in the process of programmed or spontaneous action." The author points to three basic types of activities which he sees to be the source of personal dignity, i.e. the belief in one's value as a human being. These include: (1) defence of one's own identity and beliefs; (2) activity directed toward other people, expressed in solidarity with others, will-

ingness to sacrifice, struggling against suffering, engaging in altruistic activities and building intimate relationships; (3) creativity, manifested in the creation of original objects and ideas.

Of essential importance, from both the theoretical and practical points of view, is the distinction between dignity understood as a trait of character and dignity defined as judgment formulated by a person concerning his own actions. That judgement, expressed in the individual's attitude towards oneself, is a kind of subjective experience which a person communicates to others verbally and through certain behaviours (see Wednesday, 1993; Koziellecki, 1998).

In the opinion of Oleś (2007), the sense of self-dignity can be understood in three ways. Firstly, it may be analysed in relation to the sense of freedom and responsibility. Understood in this way, it is associated with the awareness of being a person, and hence, awareness of the meaning of one's own life, its great value and uniqueness of the possessed properties as well as the tasks that a human being has. Secondly, dignity can be perceived as a result of intentional activity of the individual, which is reflected in their creative activity, the particular goals they set for themselves and the meeting of those goals as well as the personal treating of oneself and other people. Thirdly, a sense of self-dignity can be considered in terms of self-esteem, for, like the latter, it contributes to strengthening oneself (self enhancement), is the foundation of well-being, and prevents one from being manipulated.

According to Steuden (2011), a sense of self-dignity is constituted by two main elements: (1) the subjective belief that I am valuable as a person and deserve respect; (2) the subjective belief that other people actually treat me as someone valuable and deserving respect. Understood in this way, the sense of self-dignity has a personal character and constitutes an important factor of personal, social and spiritual growth. It is conditioned, on the one hand, by self-esteem and, on the other, by the attitude other people take towards a given person. A strong belief in self-esteem and the awareness of respect experienced in social relations provide stability to the sense of self-dignity.

In turn, low self-esteem and the awareness of a lack of recognition from others should be treated as a contradiction and negation of the sense of self-dignity. The essential components of the structure of the sense of self-dignity are: (1) *respect for oneself* based on the hierarchy of values one espouses and enacts; (2) *confidence in oneself and in one's capabilities* empowering one to undertake difficult and responsible tasks in life; and (3) *full self-acceptance* entailing the awareness of one's strengths and weaknesses.

In the conception proposed by Steuden (2011), experience of a sense of personal dignity depends on whether the individual is aware of the sense of self-dignity (i.e., whether they know they deserve respect) and what the person does with this awareness. Undoubtedly, the degree to which a person is aware of their own dignity is different for different people. Therefore, one can speak of a greater or lesser sense of self-dignity. Its level depends mainly on the types of values that the person considers important and the way they enact them. The higher the values a person espouses in their life and the more aware a person is of the significance of their choice and the more involved

a person is in the enactment of those values, the greater is the sense of their own dignity and value.

This belief finds confirmation in the views of Allport (1988), Dąbrowski (1986), Maslow (1970), Koziński (1977, 1998) and Frankl (2009). According to the last of those authors, the sense of self-dignity, like the sense of life, is one of the key existential dimensions of life for every human being. This sense can be achieved by undertaking creative work and completing specific tasks, preference for and enactment of values such as goodness, truth, beauty; contact with another person, and struggle with disease, disability and suffering.

Recognizing axiological preferences as an essential aspect of self-dignity of a person, Steuden (2011) assumes that personal dignity has two other important aspects: one being the experience of importance of the sense of self-dignity and the other being the loss of the sense of self-dignity. This results from the fact that the values, arranged in a hierarchical system, regulate the fulfilment of needs, influence the choice of distant goals and the way they are met, and strongly influence a person's self-esteem, relating to various aspects of the Self. They also constitute the rules that govern human life and the valuation of the world (Schwartz, 2001).

Therefore, in crisis situations, moments of decisions, choices and interpersonal conflicts, in which one explicitly appeals to the system of values one recognizes, questions about the meaning of personal dignity may arise (Koziński, 1998). Undoubtedly, enactment of the highest values and the conscious choice thereof, strengthens and develops in an individual a sense of their own dignity and worth (Steuden, 2011).

In addition, it is difficult to reject the reflection by Allport (1988, p. 64), who states that "Even the best integrated personality does not always work in total harmony with its system of values." Taking action contrary to the recognized value system can lead to a loss of self-dignity. This is because it is not possible to expect respect for oneself, if one, more or less consciously, chooses hypocrisy and falsehood over truth, evil over good, passivity over the effort to improve one's personality (Steuden, 2011)

Steuden (2011), presenting a multi-faceted approach to self-dignity, also draws attention to its interpersonal character. She recognizes that dignity is born and constituted in relationships with other people. It depends, therefore, on being aware of human recognition, and is strengthened when one takes responsibility for another human being and their life. The researcher highlights the relational aspect of experiencing self-dignity assuming that the issue of human dignity "(...) clearly affects the process of maturation of personality and constructing one's own life in the context of other people—the family, the social or national community" (Steuden, 2011, p. 19).

The subjective belief that one deserves respect and has the right to be recognized in the eyes of others is acquired and reinforced in social interactions. In this context, it seems worth quoting an observation made by Kępiński (2002, p. 104), who states that "Looking at someone, we see at the same time ourselves, our own social reflection, i.e. we see how that someone regards us with disdain, fear, admiration, or contempt."

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE QSSD-3

Design of the questionnaire

The idea to design the Questionnaire of Sense of Self-Dignity (QSSD) dates back to 2006. At its root lay clinical practice—mainly (though not exclusively) in the area of the psychology of aging and old age—which revealed that the sense of dignity was one of the key psychological variables affecting the functioning of a person both in the objective and the subjective aspect. We did not find, however, a tool with satisfactory psychometric parameters which could be used to describe and characterize self-dignity. This fact stimulated the creation of the original version of the questionnaire (QSSD-1). It consisted of 16 open questions aimed at revealing the implicit theories of self-dignity. The procedure was analogous to the one used in research on wisdom carried out under the Berlin Institute paradigm (Baltes & Mayer, 2001), namely, the objective was to capture how people understand the sense of self-dignity—what properties they attribute to persons who they regard as being characterized by a high sense of self-dignity.

In order to obtain this type of data, four independent studies were carried out, which involved a total of 270 elderly people aged 60 to 75 years. The first two, by Balazy (2007) and Gajewska (2007), were conducted on a non-clinical group—students of the University of the Third Age ($n = 150$). The remaining two studies (Dudzik, 2008; Koziol, 2010) involved a clinical sample—residents of social care homes ($n = 120$). The empirical data obtained in those investigations became the basis for the creation of the second version of the questionnaire (QSSD-2) (Steuden, 2010), which differed from the first one in that (1) instead of open-ended questions it included multiple choice questions, and (2) was supplemented with a response scale (the respondents were asked to select one of the four responses—“No,” “Rather no,” “Mostly,” “Yes”). The empirical material obtained in the study provided information about the sense of dignity of the respondents, which became the basis for further work on the questionnaire.

The process of creating the final version of the questionnaire (QSSD-3), which was intended to be used as an instrument for the quantitative measurement of the sense of dignity, was based on the principles of design of psychological tests commonly recommended in the psychometric literature (Anastasi & Urbina, 1997). The construction of QSSD-3 ran in several steps. In the first step, the psychological concepts of human dignity were reviewed. Characterizations of “sense of dignity” found in the literature of the subject were used to formulate a definition of the concept, which allowed its operationalization.

It was assumed that the sense of self-dignity was a multidimensional construct, and that its structure had three constitutive elements: (1) respect for oneself based on the hierarchy of values one espouses and enacts; (2) confidence in oneself and in one’s capabilities empowering one to undertake difficult and responsible life tasks; (3) full self-acceptance entailing awareness of one’s strengths and weaknesses. In the experience of the sense of personal

dignity defined in this way, it is important how much the individual is aware of their self-dignity (cognitive aspect) and what they do with this awareness. The degree of awareness of own dignity varies in people. Therefore, one can speak of a greater or lesser sense of self-dignity. Its level depends largely on the hierarchy of values a person recognizes and the ways they enact those values. The higher the values a person defines as being significant for their life and the more involved the person is in enacting those values, the greater is their sense of self-dignity. This view finds confirmation in the literature of the subject (Kozielecki, 1998; Frankl, 2009; Dąbrowski, 1986; Maslow, 1970; Allport, 1988)

Viewing of self-dignity in connection with axiological preferences makes *the experiences of importance and loss of self-dignity* an integral part of experiencing a sense of dignity. This is due to the fact that values, arranged in a hierarchical system, determine the way one regulates one's needs, largely influence what distant targets one sets and reaches, and strongly affect one's self-esteem (Schwartz, 2001). Hence, difficult, conflict situations or moments when pivotal life decisions and choices are made, the natural context for which is the system of values a person espouses, can stimulate questions about the importance of personal dignity defined in this way (Kozielecki, 1998). Acting according to the accepted values develops and strengthens the human sense of self-dignity. By contrast, remaining in conflict with the recognized value system can lead to a loss of the sense of self-dignity. The sense of dignity is actualised in human relations. This means that it depends on a person's awareness of having the recognition of other people and that it consolidates when a person takes responsibility for another human being and their life. The subjective belief that one deserves respect and has the right to be recognized by others is acquired and reinforced in social interactions (Studen, 2011).

In the next step of developing the QSSD-3, results of previous studies (Balazy, 2007; Gajewska, 2007; Dudzik, 2008; Koziol, 2010) were used to establish the main features of self-dignity, both at the individual as well as interpersonal (social) levels, and the following dimensions were distinguished: understanding, meaning, experience and loss. For a description of these dimensions, 86 statements were collected, which were then evaluated by competent judges (persons with psychological education). The subject of the evaluation was the compliance of the particular items with the theoretical assumptions as well as their linguistic correctness.

As a result, 13 statements which turned out to have little relevance to the subject of the study or were formulated in an ambiguous or complex way were rejected. Subsequently, the remaining 73 claims were re-evaluated by competent judges in order to assess how much a specific statement was adequate to the measured dimension of self-dignity. In the assessment, the judges used a 4-point scale to rate how well the statement expresses the measured aspect of the sense of dignity: 1—inadequate, 2—rather adequate, 3—adequate, 4—definitely adequate. Fifty five statements which were assessed as adequate

and definitely adequate were included in the experimental version of the QSSD-3.

Factorial structure of QSSD-3 (EFA)

In order to assess the psychometric indicators of the scale, studies, which involved 402 people (245 women and 157 men) aged 16 to 84 years ($M = 42.62$, $SD = 16.46$), were carried out. To check the factorial structure of the QSSD-3 questionnaire, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) based on the method of Major Components with an oblique Oblimin rotation ($\delta = 0$) and Kaiser normalization was applied. Determinant of the matrix for the analysed data was smaller than .001; KMO test = .893 with a significant Bartlett test of sphericity ($\chi^2 = 12014.54$; $p < .001$).

Based on the scree test criterion, the four-factor structure of self-dignity was confirmed. The theoretically outlined dimensions were thus verified empirically. A further EFA was then carried out enforcing a four-factor measure. A criterion for inclusion of a given item in a given factor was a value load greater than the absolute value of .60 with a low degree of saturation of the other factor. As a result, 36 statements were qualified for further analysis (12—dimension of cognition; 9—dimension of loss; 7—dimension of relation; and 8—dimension of experience). The extracted factors explained a total of 44.23% of variance in results. The results of the factor analysis, the percentage of the explained variance and the reliability of the individual scales are presented in Table 1. Due to the large number of items, the table contains only those items which are included in one of the four components of self-dignity.

The next step involved the analysis of the content of the items included in the four factors. On this basis, more precise names were given to the extracted dimensions of self-dignity. Ultimately, it was assumed that sense of self-dignity was a construct which consisted of the following dimensions:

Dimension of Cognition—combining the two originally separate components of self-dignity (understanding and meaning)—indicates the way an individual understands their sense of self-dignity and what importance they attach to it. This dimension describes the extent to which an individual treats the sense of self-dignity as a way of perceiving oneself and one's own functioning. It reveals how self-esteem, self-respect, the ability to decide for oneself and adequate assessment of the self are linked to a sense of self-dignity. In addition, this dimension reflects the recognition of self-dignity as a source of confidence, well-being and positive self-esteem, which allows one to effectively achieve personal goals and overcome life difficulties on the basis of the recognized system of values.

Dimension of loss of self-dignity—this dimension indicates the situations and circumstances of life (psychological crisis, disease, poverty, life choices), in which the individual loses the sense of self-dignity. It also specifies the extent to which non-compliance with the recognized system of values and principles adopted is connected with a loss of self-dignity. In addition, this dimension reflects how the loss of self-dignity affects the functioning of an individual in the emotional sphere and their attitude toward themselves.

Table 1.
The results of exploratory factor analysis (main component axis method) for the QSSD (percentage of the explained variance, factor loadings and Cronbach's α for particular factors)

Number of item	Sens of self-dignity			
	Dimension of Cognition	Dimension of Loss	Dimension of Relation	Dimension of Experience
	<i>n</i> = 12	<i>n</i> = 9	<i>n</i> = 7	<i>n</i> = 8
	<i>expl. v.</i> = 22.84%	<i>expl. v.</i> = 11.14%	<i>expl. v.</i> = 5.37%	<i>expl. v.</i> = 4.86%
	α = .91	α = .87	α = .90	α = .87
QSSD-21	.73	.12	.31	.27
QSSD-22	.71	.06	.31	.23
QSSD-24	.71	.06	.27	.28
QSSD-20	.67	.14	.31	.25
QSSD-6	.67	.23	.18	.22
QSSD-42	.67	.29	.32	.29
QSSD-23	.65	.03	.28	.26
QSSD-2	.65	.16	.24	.02
QSSD-41	.64	.31	.30	.29
QSSD-19	.63	-.03	.22	.27
QSSD-38	.62	.26	.25	.21
QSSD-39	.62	.30	.34	.21
QSSD-32	.11	.76	-.01	-.13
QSSD-34	.13	.75	.05	-.07
QSSD-28	.17	.72	.05	-.10
QSSD-36	-.04	.70	.01	-.19
QSSD-27	.21	.67	-.04	-.18
QSSD-26	.15	.67	-.07	-.15
QSSD-30	.09	.67	.03	-.31
QSSD-31	.03	.63	.04	-.32
QSSD-35	.04	.61	.02	-.08
QSSD-52	.36	-.03	.84	.34
QSSD-53	.38	-.08	.82	.33
QSSD-54	.36	-.11	.80	.38
QSSD-51	.25	-.04	.79	.23
QSSD-48	.33	.02	.77	.16
QSSD-49	.29	-.01	.67	.12
QSSD-55	.33	.05	.64	.34
QSSD-10	.16	-.25	.16	.78
QSSD-11	.16	-.23	.16	.78
QSSD-12	.25	-.16	.09	.71
QSSD-9	.18	-.09	.24	.70
QSSD-13	.29	-.22	.19	.69
QSSD-45	.22	-.02	.33	.65
QSSD-44	.26	.01	.34	.64
QSSD-43	.32	.06	.30	.61

Symbols: *n*—number of items included in a given factor; *expl. v.*—the percentage of explained variance; α —the reliability of the scale (Cronbach's α).

Dimension of relation—reflects the degree of awareness of an individual with regard to the role played by the sense of self-dignity in building relationships with other people and psychosocial functioning of a human being. It also reveals the extent to which a person experiences a sense of self-dignity by creating and nurturing relationships with others.

Dimension of experiencing a sense of self-dignity—reveals whether and to what extent a person engages in reflection upon their own dignity, both in difficult or conflict situations, where there is a risk of violation of the sense of self-dignity, as well as in seminal life moments and when pivotal life decisions are made.

The final version of the QSSD-3 scale consists of 36 items forming the following four dimensions: Cognitive (contains statements: 1, 3, 5, 8, 10, 12, 14, 16, 20, 22, 32, 34), Loss (contains statements 13, 15, 17, 19, 21, 23, 25, 27, 36), Relational (contains statements 11, 18, 24, 29, 31, 33, 35), and Experience (contains statements: 2, 4, 6, 7, 9, 26, 28, 30). Answers are given on a five-point scale (1—"Agree," 2—"Rather agree," 3—"Neither agree nor disagree," 4—"Rather disagree," 5—"Disagree"). Due to the fact that each dimension includes from 7 to 12 items, raw scores for each of the dimensions are within different point ranges. The sum of points obtained on the particular scales of the QSSD constitutes the raw score. The overall raw score is obtained by summing the raw results of the cognitive, relational, experience and loss dimensions (using reversed scoring: 5—"Agree," 4—"Rather agree," 3—"Neither agree nor disagree," 2—"Rather disagree," 1—"Disagree").

Cronbach's alpha coefficient was used to measure the inner compatibility for the whole scale ($\alpha = .89$) and for its various dimensions. The values of the coefficient were as follows: Dimension of Cognition $\alpha = .91$; Dimension of Loss $\alpha = .87$; Dimension of Relation $\alpha = .90$; Dimension of Experience $\alpha = .87$.

Theoretical validity of the QSSD-3, (CFA)

To empirically verify the factorial structure of the QSSD-3 extracted in EFA, further studies were carried out which included 517 patients (260 men and 257 women) aged 23 to 75 years $M = 55.59$, $SD = 13.35$. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) with item parcelling was used (see Ciecuch, 2010a, 2010b). When such a procedure is chosen, it is necessary to meet the statistical assumptions about the one-dimensional character of the analysed factors (Bandalos, & Finney, 2001; Little, Cunningham, & Shahar, 2002; Bandalos, 2008; Williams & O'Boyle, 2008). In the present study, these assumptions were verified using EFA (with one enforced factor), which was carried out separately for each factor (dimension). The scree test plot was adopted as a verification criterion. However, given the requirements for cross-validation (Refaeilzadeh, Tang & Liu, 2009; Arlot & Celisse, 2010), the examined sample ($N = 517$) was randomly divided into two subgroups. In the first group ($n = 112$), EFA was conducted (ratio of items to the subjects in the group was 1:10), while in the second ($n = 405$), CFA was carried out. The analysed groups were characterized by a similar demographic structure.

The aim of the exploratory analyses was to (1) check whether the particular factors of sense of self-dignity fulfilled the one-dimensionality condition; (2) create parcels of items, which subsequently were introduced to the CFA in the second randomly selected group. The statistical procedures used allowed for positive verification of the assumptions about one dimensionality of a factor for all the components of sense of self-dignity.

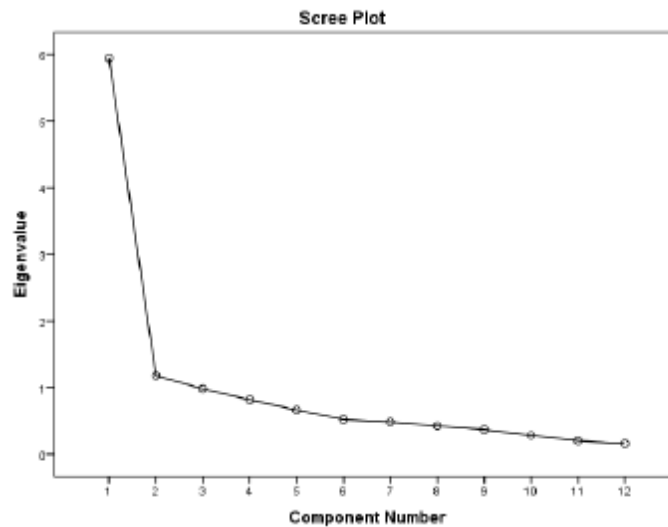


Figure 1. Scree plot in exploratory factor analysis of QSSD Cognitive Dimension.

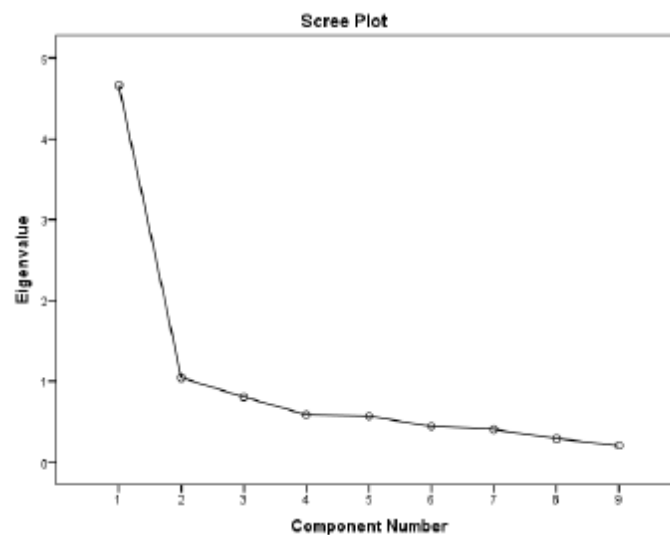


Figure 2. Scree plot in exploratory factor analysis of QSSD Loss Dimension.

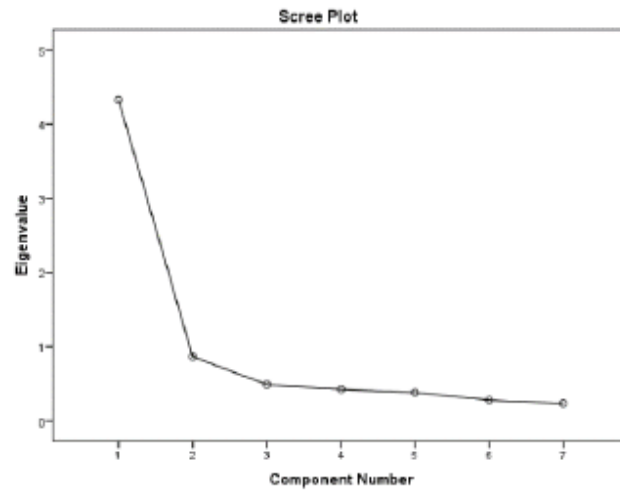


Figure 3. Scree plot in exploratory factor analysis of QSSD Relation Dimension.

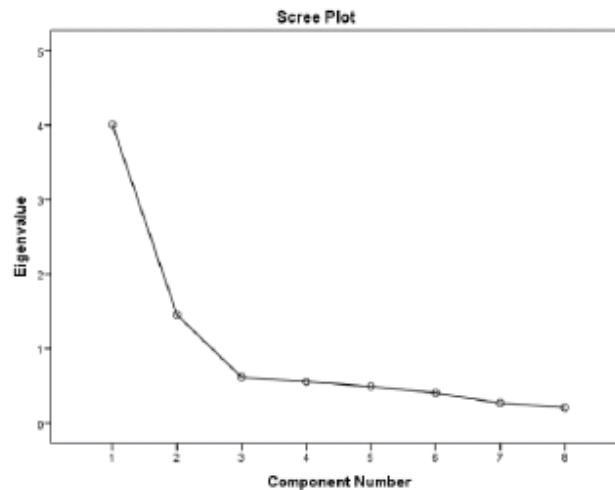


Figure 4. Scree plot in exploratory factor analysis of QSSD Experience Dimension.

Table 2 presents the percentage of variance explained by the particular factors, factor loadings of the items comprising the particular factors, reliability of the subscales (Cronbach's α) and the parcel of items to which the items on each factor belong. The scree plots (Figures 1–4) demonstrate that the assumption of one dimensionality of the factors identified in the above analysis has been met. The values of Cronbach's α coefficients ranging from .87 to .91, and the strong factorial saturation (over .40) of all items also confirm this finding. The EFA values of factor loadings were the basis for the creation of

bundles of statements introduced to the CFA in accordance with the procedure of item parcelling. Within the Cognitive factor, four parcels were distinguished, each containing three items. In the case of the remaining factors, three parcels were created, each of them including two or three statements. The numbers of the parcel, to which the particular items were assigned, are given in Table 2.

Table 2.

The results of exploratory factor analysis (main component axis method) for each factor separately (the percentage of the explained variance and factor loadings) α Cronbach and assignment of items to groups in the confirmative factor analysis

Sense of self-dignity											
Dimension of Cognition			Dimension of Loss			Dimension of Relation			Dimension of Experience		
<i>n</i> = 12			<i>n</i> = 9			<i>n</i> = 7			<i>n</i> = 8		
expl. v. = 49.52%			expl. v. = 51.81%			expl. v. = 61.83%			expl. v. = 5.10%		
α = .91			α = .87			α = .90			α = .87		
<i>k</i>	f.l.	p.i.	<i>k</i>	f.l.	p.i.	<i>k</i>	f.l.	p.i.	<i>k</i>	f.l.	p.i.
QSSD-14	.81	1	QSSD-19	.86	1	QSSD-18	.87	1	QSSD-4	.83	1
QSSD-32	.80	2	QSSD-27	.76	2	QSSD-24	.83	2	QSSD-6	.81	2
QSSD-10	.76	3	QSSD-17	.75	3	QSSD-11	.82	3	QSSD-7	.80	3
QSSD-8	.75	4	QSSD-21	.72	1	QSSD-33	.82	1	QSSD-9	.73	1
QSSD-12	.74	1	QSSD-36	.71	2	QSSD-29	.77	2	QSSD-2	.72	2
QSSD-20	.74	2	QSSD-15	.68	3	QSSD-35	.72	3	QSSD-30	.60	3
QSSD-34	.73	3	QSSD-13	.68	1	QSSD-31	.64	1	QSSD-28	.58	1
QSSD-16	.68	4	QSSD-23	.67	2	—	—	—	QSSD-26	.53	2
QSSD-5	.66	1	QSSD-25	.62	3	—	—	—	—	—	—
QSSD-3	.65	2	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
QSSD-22	.58	3	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
QSSD-1	.49	4	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—

Symbols: *n*—number of items included in a given factor; expl. v.—percentage of explained variance; *k*—item number according to scale; f.l.—the value of factor loading; α —reliability of the scale (Cronbach's α); p.i.—parcel of items in CFA.

The model presented a satisfactory level of fit on all goodness-of-fit indices, which meant it was well suited to the data and thus could be successfully adopted in research (CMIN/df = 2.285; RMSEA = .056; SRMR = .035; PCLOSE = .191; GFI = .950, CFI = .977; TLI = .970) (Bowen & Guo, 2011; Byrne, 2016). Overall, the analyses confirmed the four-factor (four-dimensional) structure of self-dignity. They also showed the QSSD questionnaire had good psychometric properties. Both Cronbach's α (as indicator of reliability), as well as indicators of goodness of fit of the model in the CFA (used as indicators of construct validity) have proven to be high enough for the instrument to be successfully used in scientific research.

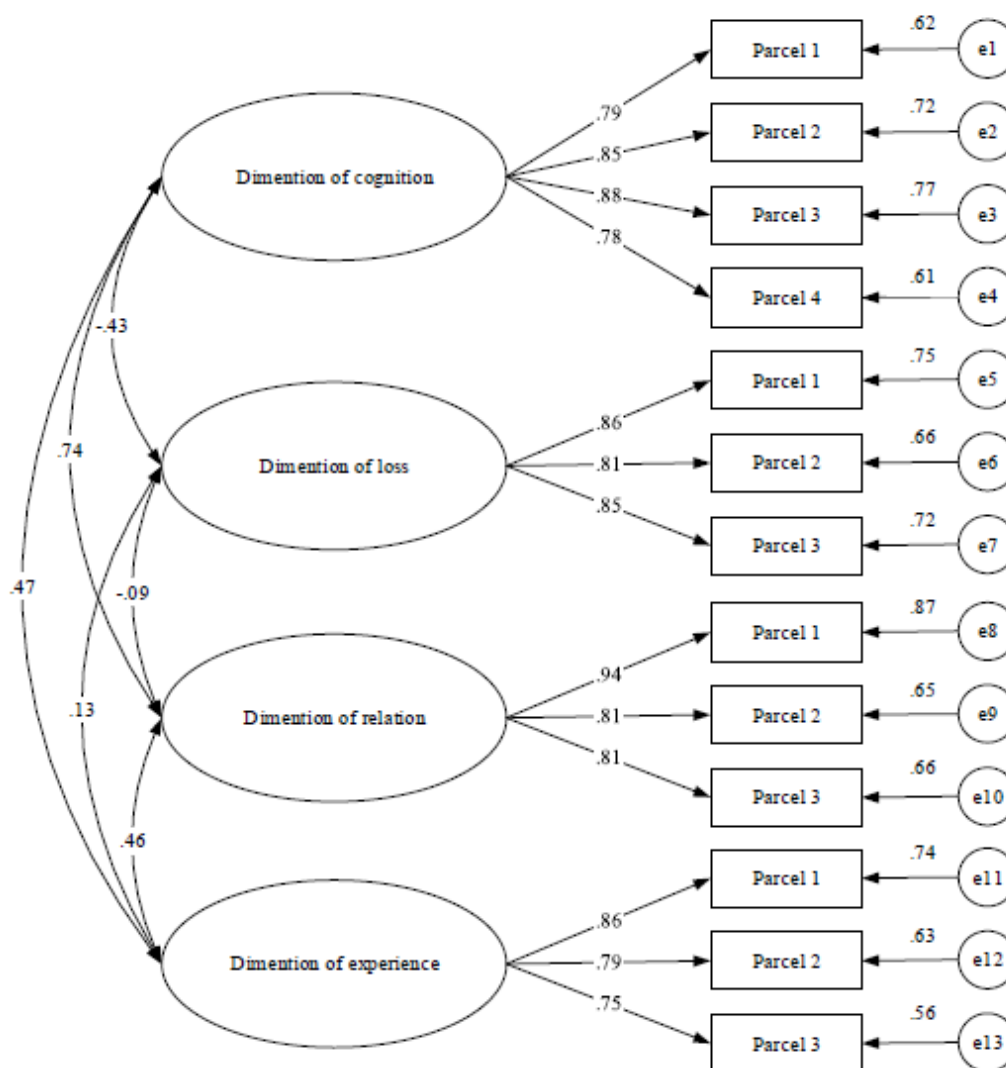


Figure 5. Confirmatory factor analysis model with item parcelling for the QSSD (N = 405).

SUMMARY

The analysis of psychological (and non-psychological) literature reveals that the sense of dignity is a complex construct and, therefore, one that is difficult to operationalise. As a result, the issue of self-dignity is more often a subject of theoretical reflection than empirical research. Such a state of affairs is evidenced by the fact that neither Polish nor European psychology offer tools for psychological measurement of the sense of dignity which would have satisfactory psychometric properties. Previous attempts to create such instruments, although deserving a notice, are better suited for qualitative analysis. This state of affairs has become an essential motive for the design of the QSSD.

Therefore, the present study has verified the concept of self-dignity and the tool based on it, used to measure this variable. Firstly, EFA was used to establish the factorial structure of the instrument and then CFA with item parcelling was performed to confirm the (EFA-based) model of self-dignity. As a result of these analyses, the four-dimensional structure of self-dignity was revealed and confirmed.

The results of research presented in this article conducted on a Polish sample are consistent with the concepts developed in the psychology of personal dignity and sense of self-dignity. This is indicated by the analysis of the correlations between the revealed (4) components of sense of dignity (see Figure 5) and their relation to the general result (values of correlation coefficients between the general result and cognitive, loss, relational and experience dimensions areas follow .89; .47; .78; .63, respectively, at a significance level $p \leq .001$).

The correlations (between the four factors and the global index of self-dignity) were sufficiently high to recognize that the isolated factors were the dimensions of the same construct—the sense of self-dignity. At the same time, the configuration of the correlation values for the extracted components of sense of dignity indicates that they are interdependent. The analysis also confirmed the good psychometric properties of the Polish adaptation of the QSSD-3. Both Cronbach's alpha (as reliability indicator) as well as the indicators of the model's fit in CFA (as theoretical validity indicators) proved to be high enough for the questionnaire to be successfully used in research.

LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH

The presented studies have limitations, whose elimination can be the subject of future research and analyses. Firstly, it would be worthwhile to empirically verify the four-factor structure of the sense of dignity in different age groups (adolescence, early adulthood, middle adulthood, late adulthood). Secondly, a research project devoted to the transformation of the sense of dignity throughout life would be illuminating. For this purpose, longitudinal studies should be carried out with the use of a psychometrically validated tool, a good example of which is the Polish version of the QSSD-3. Thirdly, intercultural research would be of high interest. Fourthly, it would be helpful to give an

empirical answer to the question whether the sense of dignity has real psychological consequences for the functioning of the individual in various areas of life.

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Appendix

QSSD-3 (S. Steuden, P. Brudek, 2013)

Below is a series of statements that relate to the sense of self-dignity. Please, read carefully each of them and rate to what extent you agree with their content. There is no good or bad, correct or inappropriate answer to the questionnaire because everyone feels differently. Only sincere answers, consistent with what you think, are good and helpful. When answering, please follow your own experiences, thoughts and feelings. Answers are provided by inserting an X in the appropriate column.

	Yes	Rather yes	And yes, and no	Rather no	No
1. A manifestation of the sense of self-dignity is the awareness of self-worth and self-respect.					
2. Questions about my own dignity arise in me when it is violated by others.					
3. The sense of self-dignity is a very important trait.					
4. In times of difficulty and problems, I have questions about my own dignity.					
5. Self-dignity is expressed in achieving positive goals and in the balance of life.					
6. In moments of various choices and decisions appear in me questions about my own dignity.					
7. Situations of conflicts in relations with others make me ask myself about my own dignity.					
8. The sense of self-dignity is helpful to me in relationships with others.					
9. Making my life balance I ask myself questions about my own dignity.					
10. What gives me a sense of self-confidence and allows me to be myself is a sense of my own dignity.					
11. It is important for me that my dignity is recognized by the people for whom it matters.					
12. The sense of self-dignity helps me in making decisions and accomplishing my personal goals.					
13. My sense of dignity bothers me in doing my work.					
14. The sense of self dignity helps in maintaining my well-being and positive self-esteem.					
15. In difficult situations, a sense of my own dignity bothers me.					
16. In overcoming difficulties and better functioning, self-dignity is very helpful form me.					

17. In very difficult life situations I lose my sense of dignity.					
18. The awareness that others recognize my dignity helps me in my life.					
19. In interpersonal relationships I lose my sense of dignity.					
20. A sense of self-dignity gives me a sense of self-worth.					
21. Poverty causes me lose my sense of dignity.					
22. Having a sense of own dignity I feel calmness and harmony.					
23. I lose my sense of dignity in situations of collapse, mental weakness or illness.					
24. The fact that others see my dignity is pleasant to me and arouses positive emotional states.					
25. In a situation of choice, I experience a sense of loss of my own dignity.					
26. Losing my sense of dignity I am sad and I feel bad.					
27. I lose my sense of dignity in my work situations.					
28. When I lose my sense of self dignity I lose a sense of self confidence.					
29. It is important for me that others see my self-dignity.					
30. When I lose my sense of dignity I feel a negative attitude towards myself.					
31. It is important for me that others respect me and give me self-esteem.					
32. My sense of dignity helps me to achieve positive feelings.					
33. The fact that others see my dignity helps me in building proper relationships with people.					
34. Thanks to my sense of dignity, I feel content with life and I have life comfort.					
35. The fact that others see my dignity motivates me to maintain dignity.					
36. The sense of self-dignity interferes with my relationship with others.					